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Dianne Wampler 08/09/2006 04:40:29 PM From DB/Inbox: Dianne Wampler

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Text:

UNCLAS ANKARA 04525

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INFO: ECON AMB DCM POL PMA

DISSEMINATION: PAO /1  
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APPROVED: PA: JPENNINGTON  
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RUEHNO/USMISSION USNATO 5078  
RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK 1702  
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UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 03 ANKARA 004525

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DEPARTMENT FOR INR/R/MR, EUR/SE, EUR/PD, NEA/PD, DRL  
JCS PASS J-5/CDR S. WRIGHT

E.O. 12958: N/A  
TAGS: [OPRC](#) [KMDR](#) [TU](#)  
SUBJECT: ANKARA MEDIA REACTION REPORT  
MONDAY, AUGUST 7, 2006

In Today's Papers

PKK Kills Soldiers; Bahceli Slams Government PKK Policy  
All papers report four Turkish soldiers were killed and eight others wounded in an ambush by PKK militants in the mountainous province of Gumushane near the Black Sea coast on Sunday. Over the weekend, Turkey's extreme nationalist party MHP made a show of force with around 400,000 supporters attending an annual party meeting. MHP leader Devlet Bahceli criticized the ruling AK Party for "encouraging PKK terrorism," stressing that Prime Minister Erdogan will be held to account for those killed by the PKK separatists. Bahceli called for early elections. Meanwhile, Turkey's main Kurdish party DTP chairman Ahmet Turk warned the government against a cross-border military incursion into northern Iraq, saying it

would not solve problems but only worsen the situation.

#### Conflict in the Middle East

All papers continue coverage of the ongoing Israeli offensive as well as the Hezbollah attack on Kfar Giladi in which 11 Israeli troops were killed. Syrian Foreign Minister Walid Moallem said "Syria is prepared for a regional war." News commentaries say Israel's bloody attacks in Lebanon have overshadowed the deteriorating humanitarian situation in Gaza. Additionally, papers report that over the weekend, a group of 45 Turkish "Volunteers for Palestine" departed Istanbul for Damascus to show solidarity with Palestine and Hezbollah against Israel.

Commenting in conservative *Turkiye*, Yilmaz Oztuna argues that the actions of Israel, backed by the US, may have the opposite of their intended effect: "It is not possible to disarm such terrorist organizations by attacking them -- the only way is to dry up their sources of arms. Israel and the US were disturbed by Hamas and Hezbollah militants winning seats in parliament. The US believes that such developments are the biggest insult for democracy. The two allies, the US and Israel, together with the UK want to warn Palestine and Lebanon on this issue. Hezbollah and Hamas supporters are increasing with every passing day. If the spreading war ends, there is a big possibility that both organizations could end up ruling their countries as the majority party in their governments after the next elections."

#### Editorial Commentary: The War on Terror

Ergun Babahan argues in the mass appeal *Sabah* that US actions over the past few years reveal it to be "the biggest threat": "The Bush Administration invaded Afghanistan first in the name of democracy and the fight against terrorism, but, now the administration is struggling to fight against the powerful Taliban. The occupation of Iraq followed the Afghanistan occupation. President Bush claimed that the US would establish democracy there; however, Iraq also turned into a hell with innocent people dying everyday. The US's biggest ally in the region, Israel, followed in the US's footsteps and decided to bring democracy to Lebanon and Palestine. Everyday, innocent people, the majority Muslim, are killed with American ideology and weapons. Every terrorist attack in the West causes the world to shake, but all countries prefer to remain silent in the current situation. While they are causing the deaths of so many innocent people, they are shamelessly talking about Islamic terror. This past year's death toll alone is enough to prove that they are the biggest threat for the world. After all this, they seem to be shocked to see increased anti-Americanism in the region from Turkey to Pakistan."

#### TGS on Handcuffing of Turkish Major in Incirlik Airbase

*Hurriyet*, *Milliyet*, *Sabah*, *Radikal*, *Zaman*, *Yeni Safak* and others report the Turkish General Staff (TGS) issued a statement over the weekend with regard to the brief handcuffing of a Turkish pilot, Major Ferih Dincer, and his wife by a US sergeant on Incirlik Airbase in south Turkey last year. TGS said the Turkish major was drunk, that he violated traffic rules in the parking lot, and that Dincer and his wife were removed from the vehicle and taken into custody when they resisted an order to get out of their vehicle. After a discussion with US officers, a judicial procedure was launched against the US sergeant who was then sent home from Turkey, said the TGS statement. Dincer later resigned, blaming the Turkish military for "doing nothing about the incident."

#### Turkish Imam to Attend 9/11 Court Case against US

*Milliyet*, *Sabah*, *Radikal*, *Zaman*, *Yeni Safak* and others report a Turkish imam, Ibrahim Turkmen, will travel to New York on a "special visa" to attend the court hearing of his case against former Attorney General John Ashcroft and former FBI Chairman Robert Mueller for ethnic and religious discrimination. Turkmen said he was detained and tortured in New Jersey Passaic Prison after the September 11 attacks. "If I win the case, it will set a model for some 100 victims who have suffered from inhuman treatment similar to what I was subjected to," Turkmen said.

#### Poll: AKP Leads in Possible Early Elections

Saturday's *Sabah* carries a survey conducted by the polling company ANAR according to which if elections were held today, the ruling AK Party would receive 32.7 percent of votes, followed by CHP 11.5, pro-Kurdish DTP 5.3, MHP 5.1, DYP 4.9, ANAP 3.3. One-third -- 33.9

percent -- of respondents were undecided.

TV News:  
(NTV, 8.00 A.M.)

#### Domestic News

- Saudi Arabia's King Abdullah, accompanied by a 400-person delegation including 45 businessmen, is due to pay a three-day visit to Turkey on Tuesday to sign agreements on military cooperation and trade. King Abdullah will be received by President Sezer in Ankara before meeting with Prime Minister Erdogan on August 9 in Istanbul.

- Turkish police on Sunday detained 17 demonstrators in Istanbul as they attempted to protest against the ongoing Israeli military offensive in Lebanon. Following the morning prayers in the conservative Fatih neighborhood of Istanbul the same day, a group of people prayed for those killed in Palestine and Lebanon, and chanted slogans protesting Israel.

- Iraqi Turkmen Front (ITF) Chairman Sadettin Ergec and six other Turkmen officials are to visit Turkey on Monday to discuss the 2007 referendum in Kirkuk as well as the strains between Turkmen and Kurdish groups in the region.

- A public opinion survey conducted by international polling company GfK shows that the military tops the list of most trusted institutions in Turkey by 91 percent whereas politicians are regarded as the least trusted by 23 percent, down from 32 percent in 2005. The survey was carried out in 20 countries with one-on-one interviews with 19,674 people.

#### International News

- Hezbollah killed 11 Israeli conscripts in its deadliest rocket attack since the beginning of the Israeli offensive on Lebanon. Over the weekend, US Assistant Secretary of State David Welch met with Lebanese officials in Beirut on ways to end the conflict.

- The UN expressed deep concern that the deteriorating humanitarian situation in the Gaza Strip was being neglected due to Israel's ongoing operations in Lebanon.

- Iran's chief nuclear negotiator Ali Larijani said Tehran will not suspend uranium enrichment as demanded by the UN Security Council.

- A suicide bomber attacked a funeral in Tikrit, killing 10 and wounding 18 others.

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WILSON